



Alerta de Artículos Recientes 06-11 Junio

Medio Ambiente y Energía

Country Analysis Briefs: Colombia. U.S. Energy Information Administration. June 2011.

Colombia has seen a dramatic increase in oil production in recent years following a period of steady decline. The Colombian government has enacted a series of regulatory reforms to make the sector more attractive to foreign investors. In addition, it has implemented a partial privatization of state oil company Ecopetrol in an attempt to revive its upstream oil industry. The security situation in the country also has improved over the last decade, with fewer attacks against oil and natural gas infrastructure in recent years. Expanded oil production will require further investment in transport infrastructure and refining capacity.

<http://www.eia.gov/EMEU/cabs/Colombia/pdf.pdf> [PDF format, 8 pages].

The State of America's National Parks. National Parks Conservation Association. June 2011.

The State of America's National Parks is the culmination of ten years of research on the condition of natural and cultural resources within America's national parks. The data for this report were gleaned from the Center's research on 80 national parks. This research uncovered many examples of serious threats to park resources, including impacts from activities occurring on adjacent lands, concerns related to invasive non-native species, insufficient attention given to the stewardship of cultural resources, and a general lack of sufficient staff and funds to care for and interpret park resources. [*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

<http://www.npca.org/cpr/sanp/SANP-long-WEB.pdf> [PDF format, 68 pages].

International Climate Assistance. Pew Center on Global Climate Change. June 2011.

The United States and other developed countries provide assistance to developing countries to help them reduce greenhouse gas emissions, by protecting forests and deploying clean technologies, and to help them adapt to the impacts of climate change. In FY 2010, Congress appropriated \$1.3 billion to support these bilateral

and multilateral efforts. Maintaining or increasing this support in FY 2012 will provide critical assistance in the developing world while advancing U.S. security, economic and diplomatic interests. [*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

<http://www.pewclimate.org/docUploads/pew-center-brief-international-climate-assistance.pdf> [PDF format, 5 pages].

IAEA International Fact Finding Expert Mission of the Nuclear Accident Following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. Preliminary Summary, International Atomic Energy Agency. June 2011.

A team of international nuclear safety experts presents a preliminary assessment of the safety issues linked with TEPCO's Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Station accident following the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami. The team, created by an agreement of the IAEA and the Government of Japan, sought to identify lessons learned from the accident that can help improve nuclear safety around the world. [*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

<http://www.iaea.org/newscenter/focus/fukushima/missionsummary010611.pdf> [PDF format, 5 pages].

The Disappearing Act: The Illicit Trade in Wildlife in Asia. Brookings Institution. Vanda Felbab-Brown. June 2011.

Southeast Asia is rapidly becoming one of the world's "wildlife trade hotspots," despite the enormous threat this illicit activity poses to the area's biodiversity and species preservation. Vanda Felbab-Brown offers a broad set policy recommendations that form a regulatory structure to counteract the detrimental effects of this market and enhance conservation. [*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/06_illegal_wildlife_trade_felbabbrown/06_illegal_wildlife_trade_felbabbrown.pdf [PDF format, 43 pages].

Climate Change, the Indoor Environment, and Health. Committee on the Effect of Climate Change on Indoor Air Quality and Public Health, Institute of Medicine. June 2011.

The indoor environment affects occupants' health and comfort. Poor environmental conditions and indoor contaminants are estimated to cost the U.S. economy tens of billions of dollars a year in exacerbation of illnesses like asthma, allergic symptoms, and subsequent lost productivity. Climate change has the potential to affect the indoor environment because conditions inside buildings are influenced by conditions outside them.

http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=13115#toc [HTML format with links].

Biofuels: Challenges to the Transportation, Sale, and Use of Intermediate Ethanol Blends. U.S. Government Accountability Office. Web released July 8, 2011.

U.S. transportation relies largely on oil for fuel. Biofuels can be an alternative to oil and are produced from renewable sources, like corn. In 2005, Congress created the Renewable Fuel Standard (RFS), which requires transportation fuel to contain 36 billion gallons of biofuels by 2022. The most common U.S. biofuel is ethanol, typically produced from corn in the Midwest, transported by rail, and blended with gasoline as E10 (10 percent ethanol). Use of intermediate blends, such as E15 (15 percent ethanol), would increase the amount of ethanol used in transportation fuel to meet the RFS. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) recently allowed E15 for use with certain automobiles. GAO was asked to examine (1) challenges, if any, to transporting additional ethanol to meet the RFS, (2) challenges, if any, to selling intermediate blends, and (3) studies on the effects of intermediate blends in automobiles and nonroad engines.

<http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11513.pdf> [PDF format, 57 pages].

International Climate Change Financing: The Green Climate Fund (GCF).

Congressional Research Service, Library of Congress. Richard K. Lattanzio. June 23, 2011.

Over the past several decades, the U.S. has delivered financial and technical assistance for climate change activities in the developing world through a variety of bilateral and multilateral programs. The Cancun Agreements proposed that the pledged funds are to be new, additional to previous flows, adequate, predictable, and sustained, and are to come from a wide variety of sources, both public and private, bilateral and multilateral, including alternative sources of finance.

<http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/misc/R41889.pdf> [PDF format, 16 pages].

Hughes, David WILL NATURAL GAS FUEL AMERICA IN THE 21ST CENTURY?
(Post Carbon Institute Report, May 29, 2011)

The author, a Canadian energy expert and geoscientist formerly with the Geological Survey of Canada, notes that natural gas is being hailed as a promising “bridge fuel” between high-carbon fuel sources and renewable energy, largely on the basis of horizontal drilling and hydraulic fracturing technologies to tap into previously inaccessible deposits of shale gas. Hughes writes that shale gas wells are costly, both in financial and energy terms, and carry much greater environmental risks than conventional gas wells; because of this, the full-cycle greenhouse gas emissions of shale gas are almost as high as coal. The most promising areas for drilling are much smaller than originally anticipated. Hughes notes that shale gas wells experience very high depletion rates, often as much as 85% in the first year, forcing an accelerating

treadmill of drilling just to keep production from falling. In the face of declining gas production in North America, Hughes warns that we have “placed all our eggs in the shale gas basket”, and that strategies for energy sustainability must focus on reducing energy demand and optimizing the use of combustible fuels. Available online (PDF, 93mb) at <http://www.postcarbon.org/report/331901-report-will-natural-gas-fuel-america> [PUBS;GWB]

Tenner, Edward **THE OTHER GLOBAL TOXIC CLOUD: CHINA’S POLLUTION**
(The Atlantic, March 18, 2011)

Many people in North America are worried about the drifting fallout from the Japanese nuclear reactor catastrophe, but the health risks are small compared to the mercury and other pollutants China’s manufacturing and power generation are pumping into the air, writes Tenner, historian and founding advisor of the Smithsonian Institution’s Lemelson Center. Some of this atmospheric pollution settles into the waters of the North Pacific, but much of it eventually merges with the global air pollution pool that circumnavigates the planet and can reach North America within days. These contaminants are implicated in a long list of health problems, and although China is taking positive environmental steps, the momentum of its growth threatens to swamp them: China now emits more mercury than the United States, India and Europe combined. Pollution knows no boundaries: the Environmental Protection Agency estimates that just one-quarter of U.S. mercury emissions from coal-burning power plants are deposited within the U.S. itself, and the remainder enters the global cycle. Conversely, current estimates are that less than half of all mercury deposition within the United States comes from American sources. Currently available online at <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2011/03/the-other-global-toxic-cloud-chinas-pollution/72722/>

2011 Almanac of Environmental Trends. American Enterprise Institute. Steven F. Hayward. April 20, 2011.

The Almanac of Environmental Trends covers seven major indicators of environmental progress including (1) Air Quality, (2) Energy, (3) Climate Change, (4) Water Quality, (5) Toxic Chemicals, (6) Forests and Land, and (7) Biodiversity. Examples of progress include: in general the U.S. has improved water use efficiency by about 30 percent over the last 30 years, wetlands are now increasing in the U.S. after having declined for more than two centuries before the 1990s, and forestlands in the U.S. have been expanding rapidly over the last 30 years, and the global rate of deforestation appears to be steadily declining. [*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

<http://www.aei.org/docLib/Hayward-almanac2011.pdf> [PDF format, 288 pages].

Will Green Energy Make the United States Less Secure? National Center for Policy Analysis. H. Sterling Burnett and Wesley Dwyer. February 10, 2011.

Environmentalists have long cited the environmental harms caused by fossil fuels as evidence of the need to move to green sources of energy such as wind and solar power. Recently, some conservatives have joined their cause. However, key components of renewable energy technologies are made from a small number of rare earth elements, and other rare minerals. Despite the name, these elements are relatively abundant in Earth's crust, but they are rarely found in economically exploitable concentrations. The exception to this generality is the People's Republic of China. [*Note: contains copyrighted material*].

<http://www.ncpa.org/pdfs/ba739.pdf> [PDF format, 2 pages].